

Don't Waste Tires!

Introduction

Each of us can do something to help avert potential problems caused by the 33 million worn or damaged tires replaced each year in California, not to mention the millions already stockpiled at waste tire facilities or illegally dumped in alleys and by roadsides throughout the state.

Our Legislature recognized the serious environmental safety and health threats posed by improper management of waste tires and passed the California Tire Recycling Act in 1989. This act mandated that the California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB) oversee and regulate the management of waste tires in the state. To further assure proper waste tire management, the Legislature passed additional legislation in 2000 to augment the California Tire Recycling Act.*

What Can You Do to Help?

We can all take action to keep from being “rolled over” by the waste tires in our state:

- First and foremost: Maintain your tires properly!
- Buy tires that promise higher mileage.
- If they're available, buy retreaded tires.
- Whenever possible, buy products made from the rubber of old tires.
- Know who can reuse or recycle your old tires.
- Dispose of tires legally.

Maintain Your Tires

By properly maintaining your tires, you save money, protect yourself and your passengers, and help the environment. What a deal! Here is your five-step program for tire maintenance:

1. Check the air pressure in your tire at least once a month, especially before long drives (see back). Use a good tire gauge and don't depend on just visual inspections. Your vehicle's recommended tire pressure is found in the owner's manual. The air pressure on the side of the tire is the maximum pressure for the tire, not the recommended pressure for your vehicle.
2. Rotate your tires every 6,000 miles as a rule of thumb. Consult your owner's manual for more information and the proper rotation pattern of your vehicle.
3. Regularly check your tires' tread depth. When the tread seems worn, use the “penny test.” Turn a penny upside down and place the top of Lincoln's head into one of the tire tread grooves. If any part of the head is obscured by the tread, the tires are still okay.
4. Be alert to changes in how your vehicle handles, and look for uneven wear on your tire. If you notice a problem, have your dealer or service station check the alignment and tire balance.
5. Finally, practice good driving habits. Observe speed limits, steer clear of potholes and debris on the road, avoid fast starts, stops and turns, and watch out for curbs when parking or turning.



Buy Longer-Lasting Tires

When buying new tires, think long-term. Higher-mileage tires may cost more up front, but in the long run you will save money, especially if you follow the five steps listed above.

Consider Retreaded Tires

Retreaded tires are currently available for light trucks and commercial vehicles. If enough people ask for them, they will become available for passenger cars. Ask your local distributor if retreads are available for your vehicle.

* Laws pertaining to the original California Tire Recycling Act and additional legislation augmenting the act can be found in Public Resources Code section 42800, et al.

Use Tire-Derived Products

There are now many handy products you can buy made from recycled tires, such as:

- Playground safety surfaces.
- Equestrian arena surfaces.
- Mulch, soil amendment, and weed abatement mats.
- Roof shingles.
- Molded products of all sorts.
- New tires that contain recycled rubber.

Check for all kinds of recycled-content products on our Web site at www.ciwmb.ca.gov/RCP/.

How Else Can You Help?

Rubber from waste tires is used in many applications, such as school tracks and sports surfaces and civil engineering projects, rubberized asphalt concrete (RAC), and other highway uses. Call your local public works department and ask if it is using RAC on the roads in your area. RAC extends the life of pavement, quiets road noise, and provides better traction. Check with your school district and see if it is replacing old playground and track surfaces with safer rubberized material. Write the politicians who represent you and ask them to support statewide purchasing of products made with recycled rubber.

Reuse/Recycle Tires

Be sure your damaged or worn tires are properly managed. When you buy new tires, leave the old ones with the dealer, who will see that the tires are reused, recycled, or disposed of properly. If you have old tires around your property, check with your local environmental health or waste management department to find out where you can take them. Keep an eye out for local clean-up days.

Call 1-800-CLEANUP for more information or visit www.cleanup.org.

How to Check and Adjust Your Tire's Pressure

- Review your vehicle owner's manual or the driver's side door sticker to determine the proper tire pressure.
- Check the air pressure only when your tires are cool—in other words, before you drive.
- After you remove the valve cap, firmly press a tire gauge onto the valve.
- Add air to achieve the recommended air pressure.
- If your tire is above the recommended tire pressure or you accidentally overfill it, release air by pushing on the metal stem in the center of the valve with the tire gauge tool, a fingernail, or the tip of a pen. Recheck the pressure until it's right.
- Replace the valve cap when you're done.
- Repeat with each tire, and don't forget the spare. You'll be glad you checked the spare if you get a flat tire in the "middle of nowhere"!
- While you're checking the pressure, take a moment to give your tires a good inspection. Listen for leaks, check for nails or other objects embedded in the tires, look for cuts or gouges, uneven wear, bulges, tread separation, and other irregularities.

Remember, it's in your best interest to take good care of your tires. It could even save your life!

CIWMB Contacts

For a list of CIWMB's Waste Tire Program staff and their contact information, visit our Web site at: www.ciwmb.ca.gov/Tires/Contacts.htm

Tire Program Hotline: 1-866-896-0600 (toll-free) or e-mail us at wastetires@ciwmb.ca.gov.

The energy challenge facing California is real. Every Californian needs to take immediate action to reduce energy consumption. For a list of simple ways you can reduce demand and cut energy costs, **Flex Your Power** and visit www.consumerenergycenter.org/flex/index.html.